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(c) means for transmitting the receipt via a computer network to a computing device operated by or on behalf of the buyer, the buyer being presented via a user interface of the device with a representation of the information describing the purchase, and a representation of the information indicating completion of the transaction; and

(d) means for storing in a centralized database a record of each receipt generated for each transaction of a plurality of transactions, no transaction of the plurality of transactions occurring between the same buyer and seller as any other transaction of the plurality of transactions.

REMARKS

Claims 1, 6 and 11 have been amended to make minor adjustments in wording not related to patentability. Applicants respectfully request further examination in view of the following remarks. Claims 1-15 remain pending in the application.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *O'Hagan* (U.S. Patent No. 5,821,513) in view of *Haluska* (U.S. Patent No. 5,638,519). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

O'Hagan discloses a system in which shoppers in a store such as a supermarket are provided with carts having "customer information terminals" mounted on them. The terminals have bar code readers with which the customer can scan items in the store that the customer is interested in purchasing. The terminal has a display that, when the customer scans an item, displays the price and a running total. The terminal uses a graphical user interface in which the displayed pages can be received from a server computer in the store via a radio frequency or infrared local-area network.

When the customer has finished shopping, the customer activates a checkout button on the main menu. In response, the terminal displays a "checkout form page," shown in Fig. 16. (Col. 11, lines 54-58.) "The checkout form page 250 includes a visual representation of the customer's receipt in field 252." (Col. 11, lines 59-60; Fig. 16.) The checkout form page includes buttons that the customer can activate to select the form of payment: cash or credit/debit. Activation of these buttons causes the host (server) to launch a checkout program. (Col. 12, lines 1-6.) If the customer selects cash, the program displays an instruction directing the customer to a human cashier. When the cashier confirms that the sale is complete, i.e., the

cashier has received payment from the customer, the program causes a “thank you page” to be displayed on the customer’s terminal. (Col. 12, lines 7-18.) Alternatively, if the customer selects credit/debit, the customer can input the credit/debit card information into the terminal. In response, the terminal transmits a request to the server to obtain credit card authorization. “After authorization is obtained, receipt data is transmitted to the customer terminal along with a thank you message.” (Col. 12, lines 25-38.)

Although *O’Hagan* refers to “receipt data” and a “thank you page,” Applicants respectfully submit that these are not *electronic receipts*, as Applicants use the term. The term “receipt” is commonly understood to mean something that a buyer can use to prove the seller has *received* payment. The mere display of the words “thank you” or the total price of the goods in the shopping cart is not an *electronic receipt* because it is not intended to confirm the seller’s receipt of payment, and the buyer cannot do anything with it other than view it on that shopping cart terminal’s display. It is well-understood that buyers obtain sales receipts from sellers and hold onto them so that they can prove they paid for the goods in the event, for example, that the buyer needs to return the goods, obtain warranty service, etc. Something that is merely displayed for an instant and then disappears is not a “receipt” as the word is commonly understood and as Applicants intend it to mean. Furthermore, Applicants’ claims themselves include some description of a receipt, reciting that it includes a “representation of the information describing the purchase, and a representation of the information indicating completion of the transaction.” In other words, Applicants’ electronic receipt includes the types of information that are typically included in a conventional paper receipt, e.g., a list of items purchased, their prices, the total purchase price, tax, and, importantly, the amount the seller is deemed to have *received* from the buyer. *O’Hagan* does not state that any “information describing the purchase” is displayed. The mere mention of the transmission of “receipt data” in column 12, line 37 does not suggest what such data may be.

O’Hagan also does not disclose performing the receipt-generating and receipt-transmitting steps for a plurality of transactions between different buyers and different sellers. The point is that Applicants’ receipt database can be operated by, for example, a third party, whose business it is to store receipts on behalf of buyers and facilitate access to them when the buyers need them to, for example, return defective goods or obtain warranty service. The third party may have business arrangements with many buyers and many sellers, e.g., different

retailers. *O'Hagan* appears to relate to only transactions between the buyers or shoppers in the store and the *one* seller or retailer who operates the store. There is no teaching or suggestion that different sellers or retailers can be involved within the same system.

Moreover, *O'Hagan* also does not disclose or suggest “*storing in a centralized database a record of each receipt generated for each transaction of the plurality of transactions* [the plurality being that in which different buyers and sellers are involved].” In stark contrast to such a system, *O'Hagan* does not even appear to disclose or suggest storing electronic receipts anywhere. As discussed above, what the Examiner apparently characterizes as a “receipt” is the “thank you” message and other post-checkout information that is displayed on the terminal, and *nowhere in O'Hagan is it disclosed or suggested to store the displayed page in a centralized database.* Furthermore, there is no teaching or disclosure of anything stored in a centralized database that relates to transactions between different buyers and sellers. The *O'Hagan* system relates to what occurs within a single grocery store, and any records that may be stored would be those relating to that grocery store's sales. Indeed, if *O'Hagan* were to teach storing sales records, it would actually *teach away* from Applicants' invention because a grocery store would be loathe to store its own sales information along with that of its *competitors*, as sales information is highly guarded and considered confidential. Applicants believe they are the first to teach storing electronic receipts from transactions among various parties in a centralized database.

Haluska relates to controlling and tracking transactions between manufacturers and distributors. Although there can be a number of different parties involved in the transactions, no *electronic sales receipts* are involved. Applicants respectfully submit that this feature would not have motivated a person of ordinary skill in the art to have considered *storing records of electronic receipts* relating to transactions between different buyers and different sellers in a centralized database.


Claims 1-15 could not have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art unless somewhere in the cited references each and every limitation recited in the claims is disclosed. As discussed above, Applicants submit that various limitations are not taught in either *O'Hagan* or *Haluska*, including but not limited to generating electronic receipts, transmitting electronic receipts to a computing device operated by or on behalf of the buyer, doing so for transactions between various buyers and sellers, and storing records of those electronic receipts in a

centralized database. Applicants therefore respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection of claims 1-15.

Claims 1-15 remain in the application for consideration. If the Examiner believes discussion of any issue would facilitate examination, the Examiner is invited to telephone Applicants' undersigned representative.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Lawrence D. Maxwell

9-5-02

Date

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE:

1. (Once amended) A method for collecting electronic receipts for purchases, comprising the steps of:

- (a) conducting a sales transaction between buyer and a seller;
- (b) generating an electronic receipt including information describing the purchase and including information indicating completion of the transaction;
- (c) transmitting the receipt via a computer network to a computing device operated by or on behalf of the buyer, the buyer being presented via a ~~hypermedia~~ user interface of the device with a representation of the information describing the ~~primary~~ purchase, and a representation of the information indicating completion of the transaction;
- (d) performing steps a, b and c for each of a plurality of transactions, no transaction of the plurality of transactions occurring between the same buyer and seller as any other transaction of the plurality of transactions; and
- (e) storing in a centralized database a record of each receipt generated for each transaction of the plurality of transactions.

6. (Once amended) A system for collecting electronic receipts for purchases, comprising:
a server computer coupled to a ~~hypermedia~~ computer network, the server computer including:

- a receipt generator generating an electronic receipt in response to indication of completion of a sales transaction between a buyer and a seller, the receipt including information describing the purchase and including information indicating completion of the transaction, the receipt generator transmitting the receipt via the network to a computing device operated by or on behalf of the buyer, the buyer being presented via a ~~hypermedia~~ user interface of the device with a representation of the information describing the ~~primary~~ purchase and a representation of the information indicating completion of the transaction; and
- a receipt handler responding to requests received via the network from buyers and sellers; and

a database controlled by the receipt handler in which is storable a record of each receipt generated for each of a plurality of transactions, no transaction of the plurality of transactions occurring between the same buyer and seller as any other transaction of the plurality of transactions.

11. (Once amended) A computer program product for collecting electronic receipts for purchases, the computer program product comprising a computer-usable medium carrying thereon:

- (a) means for conducting a sales transaction between buyer and a seller;
- (b) means for generating an electronic receipt including information describing the purchase and including information indicating completion of the transaction;
- (c) means for transmitting the receipt via a ~~hypermedia~~ computer network to a computing device operated by the ~~first party~~ or on behalf of the buyer, the buyer being presented via a ~~hypermedia~~ user interface of the device with a representation of the information describing the purchase, and a representation of the information indicating completion of the transaction; and
- (d) means for storing in a centralized database a record of each receipt generated for each transaction of a plurality of transactions, no transaction of the plurality of transactions occurring between the same buyer and seller as any other transaction of the plurality of transactions.